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NEGRO SPIRITUALS FROM THE FAR SOUTH.

BY A. E. PERKINS.

THE Negro spirituals of slavery times were composed in the fields, in the kitchen, at the loom, in the cabin at night, and were inspired by some sad or awe-inspiring event. The death of a beloved one, even one of the master's family, the hardness of a master or his cruelty, the selling of friends or relatives, and heart-rending separations, a camp-meeting, a great revival, the sadness and loneliness of old age, unusual phenomena such as the bursting of a comet,—any of these might be sources of inspiration.

Negro folk-song making still goes on. The "Titanic" sank on Sunday, April 14, 1912. The following Sunday I saw on a train a blind preacher selling a ballad he had composed on the disaster. The title was "Didn't that ship go down?" I remember one stanza:—

"God Almighty talked like a natural man,
Spoke so the people could understand."

To-day spirituals divide themselves roughly into regular service songs, class or covenant meeting songs, and prayer-meeting songs. The service songs are usually sung to slow time, and are soft and melodious. By "service" I mean the preaching-service. The audience must be led up to a point of fervor and sympathy for the sermon. The songs reveal struggles passed through during the last week or month by the members. The earnest and touching "amens," the moans and frequent interruptions from voices in the midst of the song, expressing faith, telling of triumphs over troubles and of ordeals passed through, go down to the fundamentals of Negro religious life.

"What trials have we seen,
What conflicts have we passed,
Fightings without and fears within,
Since we assembled last?"

This stanza is a quotation, not from a spiritual, but from a hymn that is much loved by Negro church congregations; for the Negro, with a few changes in time and tone, and an adaptation of various other parts of hymns to suit his taste, has slightly turned many of the standard church-hymns into modified spirituals.

A growing sentiment for standard and classical music, both in church and social life, is tending to push the spirituals into the back-

ground. They must go, in fact. Many, many years will pass by, of course, before they will be forgotten and have fallen into complete disuse by the rural church, and in the church of the masses in the cities even; nevertheless they are passing away. They are almost entirely discarded to-day by the élite church of the race. They have no striking meaning for the spirit and life of the forward and intelligent groups of Negroes of to-day.

1. IN SOME LONESOME GRAVEYARD.

(*A fragment.*)

This time another year
I may be gone in some lonesome graveyard,
O Lord! how long?

2. KING JESUS WILL BE MINE.

(*A fragment.*)

When the moon go down in a purple stream,
Purple stream,
And the sun refuse to shine,
And every star shall disappear,
King Jesus will be mine.

3. KING JESUS COME ER RIDIN' 'LONG.

(*A fragment.*)

Dark clouds is er risin',
Thunder-balls er burstin';
King Jesus come er ridin' 'long
Wid er rainbo' 'cross his shoulders.

4. DON'T CARE WHER' YER BURY MY BODY.

Don't care wher' yer bury my body,
Don't care wher' yer bury my body,
Don't care wher' yer bury my body;
Oh, mer little soul gwi' rise and shine,
Oh, mer little soul gwi' rise and shine.

Bury mer body 'n de east of de garden,
Bury mer body 'n de east of de garden,
Bury mer body 'n de east of de garden;
Oh, mer little soul gwi' rise and shine!
Oh, mer little soul gwi' rise and shine!

5. I WISH THAT HEAVEN WAS MINE.

I wish that heaven was mine,
I wish that heaven would be mine,
I wish that heaven was mine;
Oh, save me, Lord, save me!

I called to my brother,
My brother hearkened to me,
The las' word I heard him say
Was, "Save me, Lord, save me!"
I wish that heaven was mine, etc.

6. DEAD AND GONE.

Chorus.

Dead and gone, dead and gone,
All the friend I have's dead and gone.

My dear mother died a-shoutin',
All the friend I have's dead and gone.
(*Chorus.*)

My poor brother died a-shoutin',
All the friend I have's dead and gone.
(*Chorus.*)

My poor sister died a-shoutin',
All the friend I have's dead and gone.
(*Chorus.*)

My poor father died a-shoutin',
All the friend I have's dead and gone.
(*Chorus.*)

My poor Elder died a-shoutin',
All the friend I have's dead and gone.

7. GIVE ME JESUS.¹

In the mornin' when I rise,
In the mornin' when I rise,
In the mornin' when I rise,
Give me Jesus.

Chorus.

Give me Jesus, give me Jesus;
You may have all this world,
Give me Jesus.

Ef it's 'fore day when I rise,
Ef it's 'fore day when I rise,
Ef it's 'fore day when I rise,
Give me Jesus.

(*Chorus.*)

¹ A very popular class-meeting song.

Ef it's midnight when I rise,
 Ef it's midnight when I rise,
 Ef it's midnight when I rise,
 Give me Jesus.

(*Chorus.*)

8. WHERE SHALL I BE WHEN THE FIRST TRUMPET SOUNDS?

Chorus.

Where shall I be when the first trumpet sounds,
 Where I be when it sounds so loud,
 It sounds so loud till it wake up the dead;
 Oh, where shall I be when it sounds?

Moses, Moses, he did live till he got old,
 Where shall I be?
 He was buried in the mountain, so I'm told,
 Where shall I be?

Joshua was the son of Nun,
 Where shall I be?
 Prayed for the Lord to stop the sun,
 Where shall I be?

9. O HALLELUYER, GOOD LORD!

("In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judæa, and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."—MATT. iii. 1, 2.)

And halleluyer, good Lord!
 Halleluyer, good Lord!
 Halleluyer, good Lord!

I heard Rachel cry,
 Heard Rachel cry,
 Heard Rachel cry.

What Rachel cryin' erbout?
 What's Rachel cryin' erbout?
 What's Rachel cryin' erbout?

She's cryin' erbout her child,
 She's cryin' erbout her child,
 She's cryin' erbout her child.

What's the matter with her child?
 What's the matter with her child?
 What's the matter with her child?

Oh, the king's goin' slay her child,
 The king's goin' slay her child,
 The king's goin' slay her child.

Oh, the Lord's goin' save her child,
Now, the Lord's goin' save her child,
Now, the Lord's goin' save her child.

Oh, halleluyer, good Lord!
Halleluyer, good Lord!
Halleluyer, good Lord!

IO. THE OLD ARK'S ER MOVIN'.

Chorus.

Oh, the old Ark's er-movin', movin', movin',
The old Ark's er-movin', movin' erlong.

Heaven's so high, heaven's so high,
None can enter but the sanctified.

(*Chorus.*)

When I git to heaven, be able to tell,
Two archangels goin' tone one bell.

(*Chorus.*)

When I git to heaven, ain't I goin' to shout,
Nobody dare can take me out.

(*Chorus.*)

II. 'MEMBER DYIN' DAY.

("But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."—ISAIAH xl. 31.)

Chorus.

Go, Mary, go! Run, Martha, run!
Go tell de Lord I am on my way.

Got my 'ligion in de hard time,
Jesus gi' me de eagle's wings;
Got my 'ligion in de hard time;
'Member dyin' day.

(*Chorus.*)

Don't care what you call me,
Jesus gi' me de eagle's wings;
Don't care what you call me,
'Member dyin' day.

(*Chorus.*)

Call me a slothful member,
Jesus gi' me de eagle's wings;
Call me a slothful member;
'Member dyin' day.

(*Chorus.*)

Call me a long-tongue liar,
 Jesus gi' me de eagle's wings;
 Call me a long-tongue liar,
 'Member dyin' day.

(*Chorus.*)

12. WHERE SHALL I GO TO EASE ER MY TROUBLED MIND?

("Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. . . . I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I."—ST. JOHN xiv. 27, 28.)

Where shall I go,
 Where shall I go,
 Where shall I go,
 To ease a my troubléd mind?

Go to God
 To ease my troubléd mind,
 Go to God
 To ease a my troubléd mind.

Where shall I go,
 Where shall I go,
 Where shall I go,
 To ease a my troubléd mind?

In the valley
 To ease my troubléd mind,
 In the valley
 To ease a my troubléd mind.

Where shall I go, etc.

On my knees, etc.

13. MER KNEE-BONES IS ER ACHIN'.

("The Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?"—GEN. iii. 9.)

Lord called Adam,
 Adam refused to answer;
 De secon' time he called him,
 He said, "Lord, here am I!"

Chorus.

Little chil'un, you'd better b'lieve;
 U'm mos' don' worryin' wid de crosses;
 Little chil'un, you'd better b'lieve,
 Try ter git home to heb'n by am by.

Mer knee-bones is er-achin',
Mer body's rackin' wid de pain,
I b'lieve ter mer soul U'm er chile of God,
And heb'n is er my aim.¹
(*Chorus.*)

14. MASTER'S IN DE FIELD.²

Sister, carry de news on,
Master's in de field;
Sister, carry de news on,
Master's in de field.

Pray independen', pray bold,
Master's in de field;
Pray independen', pray bold,
Master's in de field.

Brother, carry de news on,
Master's in de field;
Brother, carry de news on,
Master's in de field.

Walk independen', walk bold,
Master's in de field;
Walk independen', walk bold,
Master's in de field.

Elder, carry de news on,
Master's in de field;
Elder, carry de news on,
Master's in de field.

Shout independen', shout bold,
Master's in de field;
Shout independen', shout bold,
Master's in de field.

15. FALL ON MER KNEES AND PRAY.

Sister Mary was walkin' in de garden,
Waterin' de wiltered plants;
She put on de wings of Noah's dove,
With a great long trail behind,
A great long trail behind her,
And a great long trail behind.

¹ This verse would more logically come first.

² A very old spiritual.

Fall on mer knees and pray-a-a,
 Fall on mer knees and pray.
 Fall on mer knees and pray-a-a,
 Fall on mer knees and pray.

16. I'M GOIN' UP HOME.

("All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come."—JOB xiv. 14.)

Chorus.

Oh, wait till my change comes!
 I'm goin' up home.
 Oh, wait till my change comes!
 I'm goin' up home on de cloud.

Moses, Moses, he did live till he got old;
 Died in de mountain, so I'm told.

(*Chorus.*)

H for Hannah, how happy was she,
 Walking on de pillars of Galilee!

(*Chorus.*)

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John,
 Tell me where my Saviour's gone.

(*Chorus.*)

Pluck one block out uv Satan's wall,
 Heard stumble, and I saw him fall.

(*Chorus.*)

17. THAT'S ANOTHER WITNESS FOR MY LORD.

Read in Genesis, you understand,
 Methus'lah was de oldest man,
 Lived nine hundred and sixty-nine,
 Died and went to heaven in due time.

Methus'lah was a witness for my Lord,
 Methus'lah was a witness for my Lord.

You read about Sampson from his birth,
 Strongest man that lived on de earth;
 'Way back yonder in ancient times,
 He slayed three thousand of de Philistines.

Sampson he went wandering about,
 For his strength hadn't been found out;
 His wife dropped down upon her knees,
 Said, "Sampson, tell me where your strength lies, please."

Delila talked so good and fair;
He told her his strength lie in his hair;
"Shave my head just as clean as your hands,
And my strength'll be like a nachual man's."

Wasn't that a witness for my Lord?
Wasn't that a witness for my Lord?

Isaiah, mounted on de wheel o' time,
Spoke to God Ermighty way down de line:
Said, "O Lord! to me reveal
How can this vile race be healed?"

God said, "Tell de sons of men
Unto them'll be born a king.
Them that believe upon his way,
They shall rest in de latter day."

Isaiah was a witness for my Lord,
Isaiah was a witness for my Lord.

There was a man amongst de Pharisees
Named Nicodemus, and he didn't believe;
He went to the Master in de night,
And told him to take him out er human sight.

"You are de Christ, I'm sure it's true,
For none do de miracles dat you do;
But how can a man now old in sin
Turn back still and be born again?"

Christ said, "Man, if you want to be wise,
You'd better repent and be baptized;
Believe on me, de Son of Man,
Then you will be born'd again."

An' you'll be a witness.

18. I'M ROLLIN', I'M ROLLIN', THROUGH AN UNFRIENDLY WORLD.

O sister! won't you help me?
O sister! won't you help me to pray?
O sister! won't you help me,
Won't you help me in the service of the Lord?

Chorus.

I'm er-rollin', I'm er-rollin',
I'm er-rollin', through an unfriendly world;
I'm er-rollin', I'm er-rollin',
Through an unfriendly world.

O brother! won't you help me?
 O brother! won't you help me to pray?
 O brother! won't you help me,
 Won't you help me in the service of the Lord?

(*Chorus.*)

O preacher! won't you help me?
 O preacher! won't you help me to pray?
 O preacher! won't you help me,
 Won't you help me in the service of the Lord?

(*Chorus.*)

O mourner! won't you help me?
 O mourner! won't you help me to pray?
 O mourner! won't you help me,
 Won't you help me in the service of the Lord?

(*Chorus.*)

O Christian! won't you help me?
 O Christian! won't you help me to pray?
 O Christian! won't you help me,
 Won't you help me in the service of the Lord?

(*Chorus.*)

19. OH, WHAT A TRYIN' TIME!

Wasn't that er tryin' time with the sinner?
 Wasn't that er tryin' time with the sinner?
 Wasn't that er tryin' time with the sinner?
 Oh, what er tryin' time!

What you goin' to do when the world's on fire?
 What you goin' to do when the world's on fire?
 What you goin' to do when the world's on fire?
 Oh, what er tryin' time!

Don't you see that fire er-boilin'?
 Don't you see that fire er-boilin'?
 Don't you see that fire er-boilin'?
 Oh, what er tryin' time!

Don't you hear them sinners howlin'?
 Don't you hear them sinners howlin'?
 Don't you hear them sinners howlin'?
 Oh, what er tryin' time!

Wasn't that er tryin' time with the convert?
 Wasn't that er tryin' time with the convert?
 Wasn't that er tryin' time with the convert?
 Oh, what er tryin' time!

20. DON' YER GRIEVE AFTER ME.

("And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran. . . . And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it."—GEN. xxviii. 10-12.)

Oh, when U'm dead and buried,
Don't yer grieve after me;
When U'm dead and buried,
Oh, I don' wan' yer to grieve after me!

We're climbin' Jacob's ladder,
Don't yer grieve after me;
We're climbin' Jacob's ladder,
Don't yer grieve after me;
We're climbin' Jacob's ladder,
Don't yer grieve after me;
Oh, I don' want yer grieve after me!

Every round gits higher and higher,
Don' yer grieve after me;
Every round gits higher and higher,
I see my Jesus comin', don't yer grieve after me, etc.

21. ALL ER MY SINS ARE TAKEN ERWAY.

Chorus.

All er my sins are taken erway,
All er my sins are taken erway,
All er my sins are taken erway,
Oh, glory to His name!
All er my sins are taken erway,
Taken erway.

Sister Mary wore three links of chain,
Sister Mary wore three links of chain,
Sister Mary wore three links of chain,
Every link had Jesus' name.
All er my sins are taken erway,
Taken erway.

(Chorus.)

If I had er died when I was young,
I had er died when I was young,
If I had er died when I was young,
I wouldn't have had this race to run.
All er my sins are taken erway,
Taken erway.

(Chorus.)

The tallest tree in Paradise,
 The tallest tree in Paradise,
 The tallest tree in Paradise,
 The Christians call it the tree of life.
 All er my sins are taken erway,
 Taken erway.

(*Chorus.*)

As I went down in the valley to pray,
 As I went down in the valley to pray,
 I went down in the valley to pray,
 I went down in the valley to pray,
 My soul got happy and I staid all day.
 All er my sins are taken erway,
 Taken erway.

(*Chorus.*)

If I had wings like Noah's dove,
 If I had wings like Noah's dove,
 If I had wings like Noah's dove,
 I'd fly away to the world above,
 All er my sins are taken erway,
 Taken erway.

(*Chorus.*)

22. JINE DE MORNIN' BAND.

Chorus.

Good-mornin', good-mornin'!
 Jine de mornin' band!
 Good-mornin', good-mornin'!
 Good-mornin', good-mornin'!
 Jine de mornin' band!

Oh, run erlong, mourner, and git your crown!
 Jine de mornin' band!
 By your Father's side set down,
 Jine de mornin' band!

(*Chorus.*)

Look up yonder what I see,
 Jine de mornin' band!
 A band of angels after me,
 Jine de mornin' band!

(*Chorus.*)

Shout, my sister, fer you are free,
 Jine de mornin' band!
 Fer God's done bought your liberty,
 Jine de mornin' band!

(*Chorus.*)

23. THERE'S ER LITTLE WHEEL ER-ROLLIN' IN MY HEART.

There's er little wheel er-rollin' in my heart,
There's er little wheel er-rollin' in my heart,
There's a little wheel er-rollin' in my heart,
An' surely my Jesus mus' be true.

I'm er-prayin' fer my brother in my heart,
I'm er-prayin' fer my brother in my heart,
I'm prayin' fer my brother in my heart,
An' surely my Jesus mus' be true.

I'm prayin' fer my sister in my heart,
I'm prayin' fer my sister in my heart,
I'm prayin' fer my sister in my heart,
An' surely my Jesus mus' be true.

24. I'M ER PORE LITTLE ORPHAN CHILE IN DE WORLD.

Chorus.

I'm er pore little orphan chile in de worl',
Chile in de worl',
I'm er pore little orphan chile in de worl',
I'm er pore little orphan chile in de worl';
Good Lord! I cannot stay here by myself.

My mother an' father both are dead,
Both are dead, etc.
(*Chorus.*)

De train done whistled, and de cars are gone,
Cars are gone, etc.
(*Chorus.*)

My brothers an' sisters all are gone,
All are gone, etc.
(*Chorus.*)

I got my ticket fer de train,
Fer de train, etc.
(*Chorus.*)

25. THERE'S LOVE-FEAST IN HEAVEN TO-DAY.

Chorus.

Hail, oh, hail! Hail, oh, hail!
Hail, oh, hail!
There's love-feast in the heaven to-day.

God Ermighty spoke to Brother Jonah one day,
 Love-feast in the heaven to-day;
 He told Brother Jonah to go his way,
 Love-feast in the heaven to-day.

(*Chorus.*)

I looked towards the Northen pole,
 Love-feast in heaven to-day;
 I saw dark clouds and fire roll,
 Love-feast in heaven to-day.

(*Chorus.*)

Oh, look up yonder what I see,
 Love-feast in heaven to-day;
 A band of angels after me,
 Love-feast in heaven to-day.

(*Chorus.*)

26. DON' GIT WEARY.

Christians, don't git weary,
 Christians, don't git weary,
 Christians, don't git weary,
 For the work is 'most done.

I have a brother over yonder,
 I have a brother over yonder,
 I have a brother over yonder,
 For the work is 'most done.

Brother, don't git weary,
 Brother, don't git weary,
 Brother, don't git weary,
 For the work is 'most done.

Big camp-meetin' over yonder,
 Big camp-meetin' over yonder,
 Big camp-meetin' over yonder,
 For the work is 'most done.

Elder, don't git weary,
 Elder, don't git weary,
 Elder, don't git weary,
 For the work is 'most done.

I have a mother over yonder,
 I have a mother over yonder,
 I have a mother over yonder,
 For the work is 'most done.

27. BY AN' BY I SHALL SEE JESUS.

(A Fragment.)

By an' by I shall see Jesus,
By an' by I shall see Jesus,
By an' by I shall see Jesus,
In that land over there.

28. I BEEN DOWN AND TRIED.

(A Fragment.)

Arise, O mourner! I been down and tried,
Arise, O mourner! I been down and tried.

I done been up, and I done been down,
Been down and tried,
I done been upon de groun',
I been down and died.

Arise, O mourner! etc.

29. SWING LOW, SWEET CHARIOT!

This melody embodies in words and music the elemental fervor and emotion characteristic of the Negro. The notes are inimitably soft and soothing, with moderate time. The refrain may be sung in solo or unison. It is one of the old and now exceedingly popular Negro songs, and is most frequently asked for by white auditors who visit Negro schools, colleges, and public entertainments with programmes of a literary and religious nature.

Refrain.

Swing low, sweet chariot,
Comin' for to carry me home!
Swing low, sweet chariot,
Comin' for to carry me home!

I looked over Jordan, an' what did I see,
Comin' for to carry me home!
A band of angels comin' after me,
Comin' for to carry me home!

(Refrain.)

If you get there before I do,
Comin' for to carry me home!
Jes' tell my friends I'm comin' too,
Comin' for to carry me home!

(Refrain.)

I'm sometimes up, an' sometimes down,
 Comin' for to carry me home;
 But still my soul feels heavenward bound,
 Comin' for to carry me home.

(*Refrain.*)

30. "COME DOWN, ANGEL, AND TROUBLE THE WATER!"
 OR, "O ROCK ER MY SOUL!"

("For an angel¹ went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had." — ST. JOHN v. 4.)

Chorus.

Come down, angel, and trouble the water,
 Come down, angel, and trouble the water,
 Come down, angel, and trouble the water,
 O rock er my soul!

Before I'd lay in hell one day,
 O rock er my soul!
 I sing an' pray my soul erway,
 O rock er my soul!

(*Chorus.*)

I love to shout, I love to sing,
 O rock er my soul!
 I love to praise my heavenly King,
 O rock er my soul!

Refrain.

Rock er my soul in the bosom of Abraham,
 Rock er my soul in the bosom of Abraham,
 Rock er my soul in the bosom of Abraham,
 O rock er my soul!

I think I hear the sinner say,
 O rock er my soul!
 My Saviour taught me how to pray,
 O rock er my soul!

(*Chorus.*)

Jesus told me once before,
 O rock er my soul!
 To "go in peace an' sin no more,"
 O rock er my soul!

(*Chorus.*)

¹ Not "angels," as it is often rendered, but "angel."

I hope to meet my brother there,
O rock er my soul!
That used to join me here in prayer,
O rock er my soul!

(*Chorus.*)

Observations and Comment.—I do not think the early rendition of this old and popular spiritual by the early Fisk Jubilee Singers was strictly true, either to words or music. This would be expected, as the original would be exceedingly difficult to put to music. There are, in fact, no keys and chords that could fully comprehend many of these melodies. The only true and exact rendition would have to be made by the use of the graphophone. Different sections of the South have different renditions, of course, as most of the spirituals have, varying but slightly usually in both words and music. The above rendition or wording differs from the Fisk Singers' rendition, and I believe it more true to the original song. It is provincial to Mississippi, Louisiana, and western Alabama.

31. GOIN' TO STAN' ON THE WALLS OF ZION.

Chorus.

Goin' stand on the walls of Zion
An' view that ship come sailin',
Goin' stand on the walls of Zion,
To see it give erway.

Brothers, ain't you mighty glad
Goin' to leave this sinful army?
Brothers, ain't you mighty glad
To see it give erway?

Sisters, ain't you mighty glad, etc.
(*Chorus.*)

Mourners, ain't you mighty glad, etc.
(*Chorus.*)

Christians, ain't you mighty glad, etc.
(*Chorus.*)

32. REAP WHAT WE SOW.

The words and music are by Rev. Charles P. Jones, noted Evangelist and song-writer, of Christ Church, Jackson, Miss. Here may be seen an evolution in Negro spirituals, the irresistible influence of higher contact with the white man, and the effect of education and

changing social and religious conditions of the Negro. Dr. Jones is one of the most eloquent and unique characters in the Negro pulpit to-day; and he has filled some of the most distinguished white pulpits, both North and South. His religious fervor, implicit faith in a literal interpretation of the Scriptures, education and natural ability, have given him a national reputation.

("For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."—*GAL. vi. 7.*)

Reap what we sow! Oh, solemn thought,
With what an awful meaning fraught!
Yet surely we to judgment go
To reap just what in life we sow.

Chorus.

Yes, reap just what we sow;
Let's mind, then, what we do;
'Tis God's decree for you and me
To reap just what we sow.

Reap what we sow! Oh, when and where
Shall this reward so sure appear?
Beginning in God's church forgiv'n,
'Twill end in either hell or heav'n.

(*Chorus.*)

Reap what we sow! No wealth or power
Can help us in that judgment hour,
Except the wealth of faith alone:
We're sure to reap what we have sown.

(*Chorus.*)

Reap what we sow! O God of grace!
Pardon us ere we meet Thy face!
Grant us full cleansing from all sin,
The Spirit place our hearts within.

(*Chorus.*)

Reap what we sow! Oh, grant that we
Sow to the Spirit constantly,
That when we shall to judgment go
We'll reap just what in life we sow.

(*Chorus.*)

33. IT'S ME, O LORD! STANDIN' IN DE NEED OF PRAYER.

("Let my prayer come before thee: incline thine ear unto my cry."—*Ps. lxxxviii. 2.*)

Chorus.

It's me, it's me, O Lord!
Standin' in de need of prayer;
It's me, it's me, O Lord!
Standin' in de need of prayer.

It's not my brother,
But it's me, O Lord!
Standin' in de need of prayer;
It's not my brother,
But it's me, O Lord!
Standin' in de need of prayer.
(*Chorus.*)

It's not my sister, etc.
(*Chorus.*)

It's not my elder, etc.
(*Chorus.*)

It's not my mother, etc.
(*Chorus.*)

The reader will notice the constant recurrence of "mother," "brother," "sister," and "elder." This is common in the Negro spirituals. The word "Brother," "Sister," may refer to a fellow-member in the church, or a brother or sister by blood. "Elder" is the title usually applied to the minister in the humbler type of churches and the less educated group. "Mother," the word dear to all peoples, is not less dear to the lowly or the proud of colored race.

34. JOHN SAW THE HOLY NUMBER.

("And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand."—REV. vii, 4.)

Chorus.

John saw the Holy Number,
'Way in de middle of de air;
John saw de Holy Number,
'Way in de middle of de air.

I got er little book,
Gwi' read it through,
'Way in de middle o' de air;
I got Jesus well as you,
'Way in de middle of de air.

Refrain.

Come over, then,
John saw de Holy Number, etc.

Some er des mornin's bright and fair,
'Way in de middle o' de air,
Gwi' hitch on my wings
And try de air,
'Way in de middle of de air.

(*Chorus.*)

If yer wan' er dream dem heabnly dreams,
 'Way in de middle of de air,
 Jes' lay your head on Jordan's stream,
 'Way in de middle of air.

35. DRY BONES GWINE ER RISE ERGIN.

("O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. . . . Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: . . . and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone." — **EZEKIEL xxxvii. 4-7.**)

Most of the spirituals are founded on some striking Bible incident or character, the sequence of which incident or life gives comfort to the "traveler from earth to glory."

Refrain.

O little child'un!
 O little child'un!
 O little child'un!
 Dry bones gwine er rise ergin.

Some go ter meetin' fer to sing an' shout,
 Dry bones gwine er rise ergin;
 'Fore six months dey's all turned out,
 Dry bones gwine er rise ergin.

(*Refrain.*)

Talk erbout me, but 'taint my fault,
 Dry bones gwine er rise ergin;
 Me God Ermighty gwine er walk an' talk,
 Dry bones gwine er rise ergin.

(*Refrain.*)

If you 'spect ter git heab'n when you dies,
 Dry bones gwine er rise ergin,
 Better stop your tongue frum tellin' lies,
 Dry bones gwine er rise ergin.

(*Refrain.*)

Got my breastplate, sword, and shiel',
 Dry bones gwine er rise ergin,
 Gwine boldly marchin' through de fiel',
 Dry bones gwine er rise ergin.

(*Refrain.*)

36. THERE'S ER WHEEL IN DE MIDDLE DE WHEEL.

("The appearance of the wheels and their work was like unto the colour of a beryl: and they four had one likeness: and their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel." — EZEKIEL i. 16.)

Refrain.

There's er wheel in de middle of de wheel,
'Zekiel saw de wheel;
There's er wheel in de middle of de wheel,
'Zekiel saw de wheel.

Well, de little wheel represent Jesus Christ,
'Zekiel saw de wheel;
And de big wheel represent God Himself,
'Zekiel saw de wheel.

(*Refrain.*)

37. ALL I WANT IS A LITTLE MORE FAITH IN JESUS.

("And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole." — LUKE xvii. 19.)

This is a very popular class-meeting song with the Methodists. The tone of the song is slow, rhythmic, and mellow, soothing and comforting to the pilgrim who has resolved to be courageous and hopeful under his struggles toward "Heaven an' immortal glory."

Chorus.

All I want,
All I want,
All I want,
Is a little more faith in Jesus.

Oh, run 'long, mourner, and git your crown,
A little more faith in Jesus;
By your Father's side set down,
A little more faith in Jesus.

(*Chorus.*)

My father says it is the best,
A little more faith in Jesus,
To live and die a Methodest,
A little more faith in Jesus.

(*Chorus.*)

I love my brother,¹ yes, I do,
A little more faith in Jesus;
I hope my brother loves me too,
A little more faith in Jesus.

(*Chorus.*)

¹ "Brother" is here used as a member of the church of the same faith and order.

I love the Lord, he heard me cry,
 A little more faith in Jesus;
 And I'm gwi' trust him till I die,
 A little more faith in Jesus.

(*Chorus.*)

38. GOIN' 'ER ROCK TROUBLE OVER.

Refrain.

Goin' er rock trouble over,
 I believe,
 Rock trouble over,
 I believe;
 Goin' er rock trouble over,
 I believe that Sabbath has no end.

I wouldn't be a sinner,
 Tell you de reason why,
 'Fraid de good Lord might call me,
 And I wouldn't be ready to die.

Refrain.

I think I got religion,
 I believe,
 Think I got religion, etc.

39. LORD, I WANT TO BE LIK' JESUS IN MY HEART.

Lord, I want to be like Jesus
 In er my heart, in er my heart;
 Lord, I want to be like Jesus,
 In er my heart.

Refrain.

In my heart! In my heart!
 Lord, I want to be like Jesus
 In er my heart.

Lord, I don' 'ant to be like Judas
 In my heart, in er my heart,
 Lord, I don' 'ant to be like Judas
 In er my heart.

(*Refrain.*)

Lord, I want to be more holy
 In my heart, in er my heart;
 Lord, I want to be more holy
 In er my heart.

(*Refrain.*)

Lord, I want to be a Christian,
In er ny heart, in er my heart;
Lord, I want to be a Christian
In er my heart.

(*Refrain.*)

40. STEAL AWAY.

This is perhaps one of the oldest of the most popular of the Negro spirituals. Of its exact origin, locality, and authorship, no one knows definitely. It was very probably composed in some of the far Southern States, — not unlikely Louisiana, South Carolina, Georgia, or Mississippi, possibly Virginia. The origin of this song is said by some to have been on the Red River in Louisiana. This is possible, but it is difficult to establish exact date and place of the origin of the oldest of these melodies. The swing, rhythm, soothing melody, the heart-searching pathos of its sentiment and tone, were born of a patient and suffering soul, — one whose joy here was founded upon a hope of relief from suffering here and an entering into joy on the other side. It was also likely composed in cotton, rice, or cane fields. It combines with the swing of the body in using the hoe. The "steal away" likely meant stealing off down in the woods or into a valley to pray. Prayer, on the part of the slave, often meant dissatisfaction with his lot as a slave; but the meaning of the words was often hidden by sharp turns from the facts in mind. Slaves were not infrequently punished for praying. It was thought in some way, possibly, to have the power of bringing the condemnation of God upon the system of slavery. But singing was necessary for the dull, heavy, monotonous life of the slave. This melody has been sung all over the English-speaking world and in other tongues.

Refrain.

Steal away, steal away,
Steal away home to Jesus!
Steal away, steal away home!
I ain't got long to stay here.

My Lord calls me,
He calls me by the thunder,
The trumpet sounds in er my soul:
I ain't got long to stay here.

(*Refrain.*)

Green trees er-bendin',
Pore sinners stan' er-tremblin',
The trumpet soun's in er my soul:
I ain't got long to stay here.

(*Refrain.*)

Tombstones er-burstin',
 Pore sinners stan' er-tremblin',
 The trumpet soun's in er my soul:
 I ain't got long to stay here.

(*Refrain.*)

41. SAVE ME, MY LORD!

Chorus.

Save me, save me, my Lord!
 Save me, save from sinking down!

If I had er died when I was young,
 Save me from sinking down!
 I wouldn't have had this risk to run,
 Save me from sinking down!

(*Chorus.*)

Ever since my Lord has set free,
 Save me from sinking down!
 This old world has been a hell to me,
 Save me from sinkin' down!

(*Chorus.*)

Sometimes I hang my head and cry,
 Save me from sinkin' down!
 But I'm goin' serve God till I die,
 Save me from sinkin' down!

(*Chorus.*)

42. GOOD-NIGHT! THE LORD'S ER-COMIN'.

Chorus.

Good-night! the Lord's er-comin',
 Good-night! the Lord's er-comin',
 Good-night! the Lord's er-comin',
 And the Lord's er-comin' down.

I hang my harp upon the willow-tree,
 It sounded over in Jubilee.

(*Chorus.*)

God showed Noah the rainbow sign, —
 No water, but fire, next time.

(*Chorus.*)

There is a fire in the east, fire the west,
 There's fire amongst us Methodests.

(*Chorus.*)

43. 'MOS' DON' TALKIN' ERABOUT ME.

You may talk erbout me
Jes' as much as you please,
But me an' God Ermighty gwi' walk an' talk.

Chorus.

Oh, mos' don' talkin' erbout me by an' by,
'Mos' done talkin' erbout me by an' by.

Oh, dat liar run, and dat liar shout,
But my good Lord will fin' him.

(*Chorus.*)

44. ROUGH, ROCKY ROAD.¹

Rough, rocky road
'Mos' don' travellin';
Rough, rocky road
'Mos' don' travellin';
Rough, rocky road
'Mos' don' travellin';
Boun' to carry my soul to my Jesus,
Boun' to carry my soul to my Lord.

Mourners on the road
'Mos' don' travellin', etc.

Sisters on the road
'Mos' don' travellin', etc.

Elders on the road
'Mos' don' travellin', etc.

Backsliders on the road
'Mos' don' travellin', etc.

45. YOU WANT MORE FAITH.

The crown the good Lord give me
Shine like a mornin' star,
The crown the good Lord give me
Shine like a mornin' star.

Chorus.

Brother, you want more faith,
More faith, more faith,
Brother, you want more faith,
Shine like a mornin' star.

¹ A very old spiritual.

The robe the good Lord give me,
 Shine like a mornin' star,
 That robe the good Lord give me,
 Shine like a mornin' star.

Sister, you want more faith,
 More faith, more faith,
 Sister, you want more faith,
 Shine like a mornin' star.

46. EVERY TIME I FEEL THE SPIRIT.

This is one of the most thrilling of the later jubilee songs. It is much used for taking up collections in churches. It invariably suggests patting of feet, swaying of the body, and rhythmic bodily motions, the audience often rising to great heights of emotion and fervor.

Refrain.

Every time I feel the spirit
 Movin' in my heart,
 I will pray.

Ol' Pharaoh thought he had me fast,
 But the sea dried up an' let me pass.

(*Refrain.*)

You ask me why I sing so bol',
 It's the love of Jesus in my soul.

(*Refrain.*)

Jordan's River, so chilly and cold,
 Chills the body, but not the soul.

(*Refrain.*)

I want to go to heaven,
 And I want to go right;
 I want to go to heaven
 All dressed in white.

(*Refrain.*)

47. I KNOW THE LORD HAS LAID HIS HANDS ON ME.

Another late and exceedingly popular melody. The long, droll, and recurring rhythm, the prolongs peculiar in much of the Negro folk-songs, are touchingly beautiful. It is a song of triumph, joy, and implicit faith in the promise of the Lord.

Refrain.

Oh, I know the Lord,
 I know the Lord,
 I know the Lord
 Has laid His hands on me.

I never felt such love before,
I know the Lord has laid His hands on me,
Saying, "Go in peace and sin no more,"
I know the Lord has laid His hands on me.

(*Refrain.*)

He took me from the miry clay,
I know the Lord has laid His hands on me,
And told me to walk the narrow way,
I know the Lord has laid His hands on me.

(*Refrain.*)

Some seek the Lord, but don't seek right,
I know the Lord has laid His hands on me,
They sin all day and pray all night,
I know the Lord has laid His hands on me.

(*Refrain.*)

48. A FRAGMENT.

(*Very plaintive and touching.*)

Sing a ho that I had the wings of a dove,
Sing a ho that I had the wings of a dove,
Sing a ho that I had the wings of a dove,
I'd fly erway and be at rest.

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